GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:224
ANSWERED ON:09.08.2005
CARDAMOM IMPORTS
Francis George Shri K.;Ponnuswamy Shri E.

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the price of cardamom has gone down steeply;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to arrest the fall in price;

(c) whether cardamom imported by Nepal through Calcutta Port is being diverted to Indian markets;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the quantum of cardamom imported during the last three years, country-wise;

(e) whether the Government has also received requests from cardamom growers to stop the imports of cardamom from Guatemala;

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(g) the steps taken by the Government to arrest the diversion of imported cardamom;

(h) whether the Government proposes to declare a floor price of cardamom to help the growers of this commodity. And

(i) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIKAMALNATH)

(a) The weighted average auction price of cardamom has declined from Rs. 361 per kg in 2003-04 to Rs. 301.30 per kg in 2004-05.

(b) to (i): A statement is laid on theTable of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (b) to
(i) OF LOK SAbtfA STARRED QUESTION NO. 224 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 9.08.2005 REGARDING CARDAMOM IMPORTS.

(b) Major reasons for decline in prices of Cardamom are as follows:

Increase in production of cardamom in Guatemala and India.

Decrease in consumption of cardamom by the Gutkha industry due to ban on Gutkha production.

Lower prices of Cardamom in other producing countries.

Steps taken by the Government to arrest fall in prices are as follows:

Spices Board has extended air freight subsidy for export of cardamom from the Cardamom Development Fund between 15.10. 2004 to 20.2.2005.

Spices Board extends financial assistance to the cardamom growers through its Plan Schemes for production of planting material, re-planting, irrigation and land development etc.

In order to reduce cost of cultivation and curing of cardamom, Government has approved two new schemes viz. `Improved Cardamom Curing Devices for , Small Cardamom` and `Rain Water Harvesting for Irrigation in Small Cardamom and Vanilla`.

Spices Board is promoting the recently launched `Flavourit` brand in order to increase the demand of selected grades of cardamom.

Import duty on cardamom has been increased from 35% to 70% in the budget of the year 2002-03.

(c) & (d) Representations have been received alleging diversion of cardamom, purported to be imported by Nepal, to the Indian

markets through Kolkata Port.

(e) to (g) Yes, Sir. Representations have been received from the Cardamom Growers Association, Vandanmedu, Kerala requesting the Government to stop alleged illegal imports of Guatemalan cardamom into India. Upon receiving such representations from Cardamom growers/ Spices Board, Department of Commerce has requested Central Board of Excise & Customs to keep a strict vigil on such unscrupulous trade activities. On the advice of Department of Commerce, Central Board of Excise and Customs has issued directions to all ., Chief Commissioners of Customs to exercise strict vigilance over such illegal imports. Spices Board has also alerted Director General of Revenue Intelligence to keep a watch on import of cardamom by Nepal.

(h) No, Sir.

(i) Does not arise.